

WASHINGTON STATE LEGISLATURE JOINT TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE



FARE POLICY WORKGROUP November 8, 2011

Fare Media ■ Fare Structure ■ Interoperability ■ Implementation

PURPOSE

Joint Transportation Committee (JTC) directed to:

- Conduct a study of the Washington State Ferry (WSF) fares that recommends the most appropriate fare media for use with the reservation system and the implementation of demand management pricing and interoperability with other payment methods
- Include direct collaboration with members of the Washington State Transportation Commission (WSTC) (Transportation Budget)

DEFINITIONS

Interoperability

Degree to which system accepts fare media of other systems

Fare Media

The products that are accepted for payment

Fare Structure

The structure and policies setting the fares & to whom they are charged

CUSTOMERS

The central focus of the study is the WSF customer

Fare media, interoperability, fare structure, reservations, & demand management pricing are *interrelated* and *affect* the customer experience, satisfaction, and ultimately WSF's ridership



SITUATION ASSESSMENT

More customers are using the system – but riding less often

- *Ridership* Total number of trips taken by customers
Decreased 13% from 2000 to 2008
- *Customers* Individuals who take at least one trip on WSF
Increased 10% to 22% from 2000 to 2008

SITUATION ASSESSMENT

WSF customers are segmented by:

- *Travel Shed* Customers within travel sheds are distinct
- *Trip Purpose*
 - ✓ Regular commuters
 - ✓ Regular non-commuters
 - ✓ Tourist/recreational
 - ✓ Commercial
- *Frequency* Declining use of multi-ride products
- *Ferry access* Greater number drive-on (driver or vehicle passenger)

Customer households use more than one fare media/product

- 68% in preliminary FROG panel survey

SITUATION ASSESSMENT

Legislative direction on fares changed in 2008

WSF must:

- Recognize each travel shed unique
- Use data from current WSTC survey
- Develop with input from public hearings and Ferry Advisory Committees
- Generate revenue required by biennial budget
- Consider impacts on users, capacity & local communities
- Keep fare schedules simple

And must consider:

- Options for using pricing to level vehicle peak demand &
- Options for using pricing to increase off-peak ridership

SITUATION ASSESSMENT

Current fare structure based on

- Three principles
 - ✓ CUBE
 - ✓ Tariff Route Equity
 - ✓ Relation Vehicle/Passenger Fares
- Discounts (senior, youth, frequent passenger)
- Surcharges (summer, fuel, vessel replacement, overheight)

Fares 70% of WSF operation funds (2010)

- Vehicle fares – 75% of all fare revenue

FARE MEDIA

Three Fare Media Accepted on WSF

Wave2Go-Electronic Fare System (EFS)

- Ticket issuing and cancellation system
- Addressed long standing audit and control issues
- Provided new options for customers

One Regional Card for All (ORCA)

- Information is stored on the card
- Stored value (“e-cash”) for walk-ons, and pending for vehicles; also WSF monthly passes for passengers
- “Issuing and cancellation” not intrinsically supported by ORCA
- Stored ride capability (i.e. for multi-ride cards) available – not activated by WSF

Commercial Accounts

- Operates as a distinct system
- Billing arrangements with account holders

***Good to Go!* currently not accepted for WSF travel**

WSF CUSTOMER FARE MEDIA OPTIONS

WSF unique in providing two transportation services

- Transit (walk-on customers)
- Marine highway (drive-on customers)

Walk-on & drive-on customers different fare media options

Walk-On Customers	Drive-on Customers
Fare Media Options <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ <i>Wave2Go</i>✓ ORCA	Fare Media Options <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ <i>Wave2Go</i>✓ ORCA✓ <i>Good To Go!</i> (WSDOT tolling system)✓ Commercial
Fare Products <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Multi-ride (<i>Wave2Go</i>)✓ Single (<i>Wave2Go</i> & ORCA)✓ Monthly (<i>Wave2Go</i> & ORCA)	Fare Products <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Passengers – same as walk-on✓ Drivers<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Multi-ride (<i>Wave2Go</i>)▪ Single (<i>Wave2Go</i> & ORCA (soon))

FOUR INTEROPERABILITY OPTIONS

Options Assessed

1. ORCA Stored Ride Feature
 2. *Good to Go!* at Attended Toll Booths
 3. *Good to Go!* at Unattended Toll Booths
 4. Account-based WSF System
- Options are not mutually exclusive
 - Options 1, 2, and 4 could be implemented with existing fare products and fare structure
 - Option 3 requires that the fare structure for vehicles be simplified to be more like the state highway tolls with charges based on vehicle length, irrespective of the number of people in the car

1. ORCA STORED RIDE FEATURE

Benefit

Walk-on & drive-on customers:
Combines WSF fare products & other transit system products on ORCA card



Option Summary

Wave2Go – No change in products, some system upgrades needed

ORCA – Enable stored rides for walk-on & vehicle travel

Good To Go! – Not implemented

Commercial accounts – No change

Capital cost

<\$0.5 million

Questions to be resolved

Ability to accept passenger & vehicle multi-ride on one ORCA card

IMPLEMENT GOOD TO GO! for VEHICLES (Options 2 and 3)

Benefit

Drive-on customers – Can use *Good To Go!* account for WSF travel

Assumptions for both Good To Go! Options

- All vehicle lanes at all terminals accept *Good to Go!* – further analysis needed for implementation at some terminals or some lanes
- New readers & other site infrastructure at terminals needed
- *Good To Go!* back office customer service system used to validate transponders & upload transactions, license plate recognition
- Transactions posted at *Good To Go!* service center & then settled to WSF

Option Summary

Wave2Go – System upgrades needed

ORCA – No change

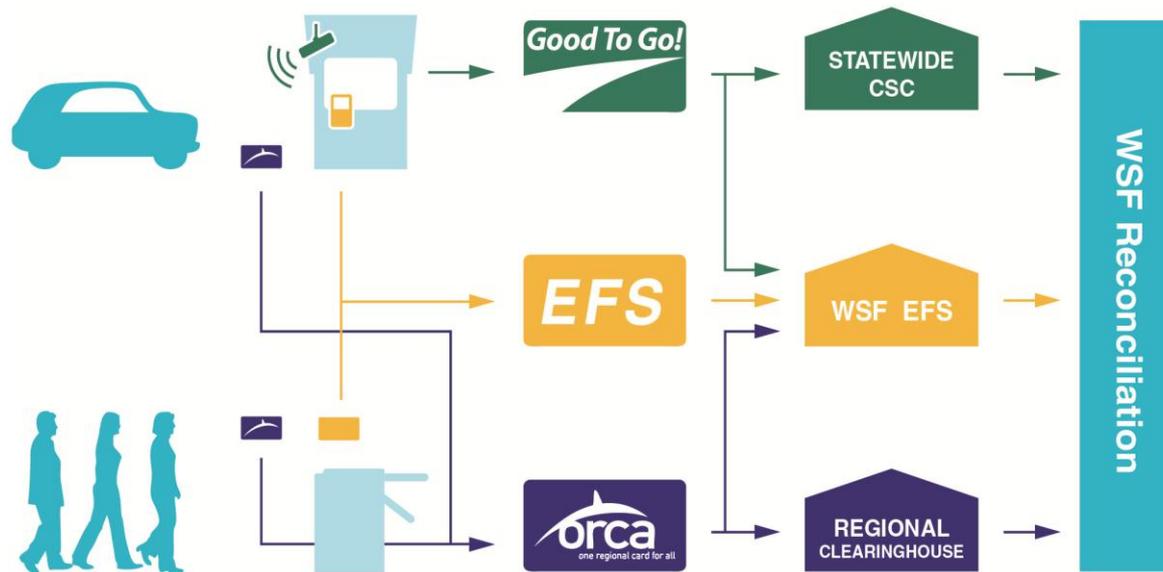
Good To Go! – Implemented for vehicles

Commercial accounts – No change or convert to *Good To Go!*

2. GOOD TO GO! ATTENDED BOOTHS

Benefit

Drive-on customers: Customer can elect to use *Good To Go!* with current passenger & vehicle fare structure



Option Summary

Good To Go! –

Implemented as a peripheral to *Wave2Go*
Wave2Go – No integration required with *Good To Go!*

Tollbooth – Fares calculated & charged to *Good To Go!* account or paid by other fare media
Commercial accounts – remain separate

Capital cost
\$2.0 to \$5.0 million

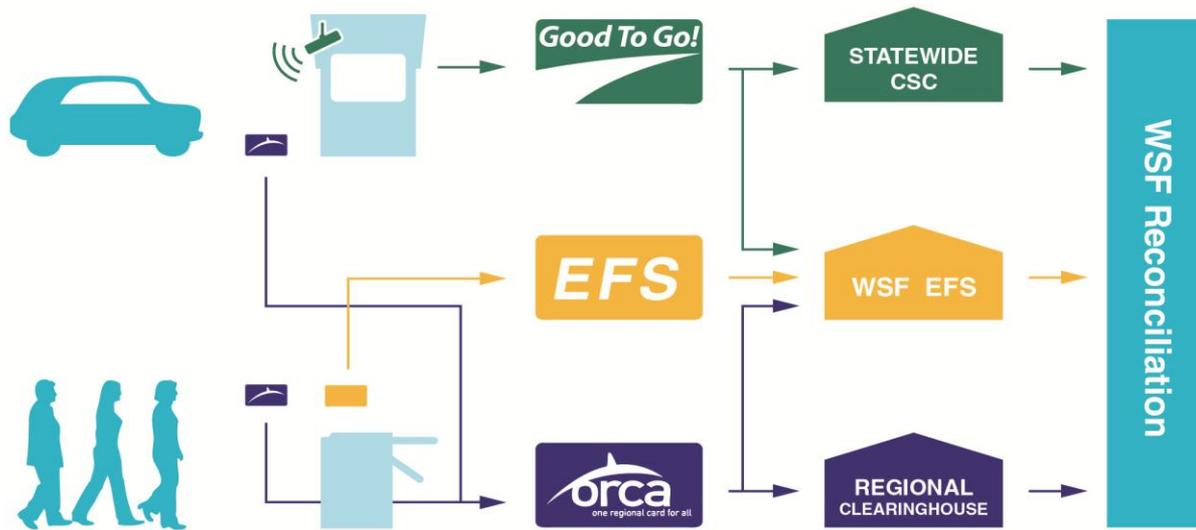
Issues
Cannot use multi-ride cards with *Good To Go!*

3. GOOD TO GO! UNATTENDED BOOTHS

Benefit

Drive-on customers: Integrated highway tolling & WSF tolling

Major change required to fare structure – vehicle only with no discounts/no passenger fees collected from vehicle passengers



Option Summary

Good To Go! – Replace *Wave2Go* & ORCA for vehicles

Wave2Go & ORCA – Walk-on customers only

Commercial accounts – Could migrate to *Good To Go!*

Capital cost

- \$5.0 to \$8.0 million
- Offset future *Wave2Go* upgrade

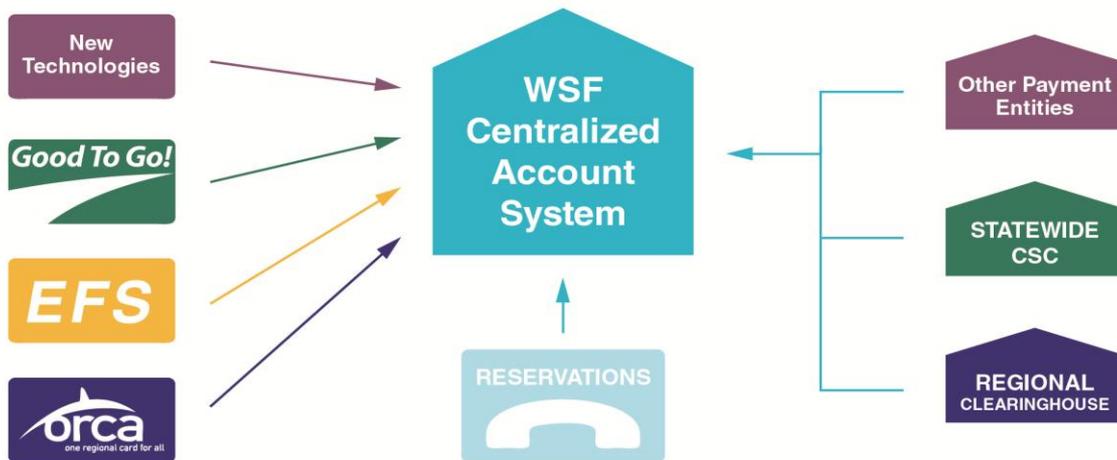
Issues to be Resolved

- Separate visual check
- Reservation deposits

4. ACCOUNT-BASED WSF SYSTEM

Benefit

- Drive-on & walk-on customers could use any existing fare media
- The system could accept any future open payment cards
- The system could link to reservations



Option Summary

Wave2Go – Major upgrade or replacement required

ORCA– Used as identifier with appropriate fare deducted

Good to Go! – Would be used as an identifier

Commercial Accounts – migrate to new system

Capital cost

- >\$8.0 million
- Leverage vehicle reservation system investment

PRELIMINARY IMPACTS ASSESSMENT

Compared the four alternatives in the following impact areas:

1. Fare media interoperability
2. Fare structure changes required
3. Technology & infrastructure changes required
4. Costs

PRELIMINARY IMPACTS ASSESSMENT

Option 1. Implement ORCA Stored Ride

- Requires no changes in existing fare structure
- Requires minimal infrastructure & technology changes
- Relatively low cost
- Provides the least interoperability
- Does not support
 - ✓ Time of day pricing
 - ✓ Future interoperability/emerging technologies
 - ✓ Integration with reservation program

PRELIMINARY IMPACTS ASSESSMENT

Option 2. Implement Good To Go! with Attended Booths

- Improves interoperability significantly
- Requires moderate changes to the fare structure – multi-ride cards cannot be used with *Good To Go!*
- Moderate infrastructure & technology changes
- Moderate initial cost (\$2.0 to \$5.0 million)
- Supports
 - ✓ Reservations – outside *Good To Go!*

PRELIMINARY IMPACTS ASSESSMENT

Option 3. Implement Good To Go! with Unattended Booths

- Improves interoperability but limits drive- on customers to *Good To Go!* (transponder or license plate)
- Requires significant changes to the fare structure
- Moderate infrastructure & technology changes
- Initial capital cost of \$5.0 to \$8.0 million (difference from Option 2 is addition of license plate reader and vehicle classification technology)
 - ✓ Mitigate level of funding needed for future *Wave2Go* upgrade
- Supports
 - ✓ Vehicle time of day pricing
 - ✓ Vehicle reservation –TBD - interface needs to be determined

PRELIMINARY IMPACTS ASSESSMENT

Option 4. Account-based WSF System

- Improves interoperability with any fare media accepted for walk-on or drive-on customers
- Requires no changes to fare structure
- Significant infrastructure & technology changes
- Highest initial capital cost (greater than \$8.0 million)
 - ✓ Major upgrade or replacement of *Wave2Go* accomplished
 - ✓ Leverage vehicle reservation system investment
- Supports
 - ✓ Vehicle time of day pricing
 - ✓ Vehicle reservation

NEXT STEPS

- WSTC Customer Survey – Initiate Nov. 9
 - ✓ Focus on household use of WSF fare products, *Good To Go!*, ORCA
 - ✓ Test interest in Ferry/Transportation System Account Concept
 - Single account for ferries
 - Single account for all transportation system
- Refine interoperability options
 - ✓ Based on discussion
 - ✓ Operations impact
 - ✓ Transaction costs – *Good To Go!*
- Fare Structure White Paper – Nov. 30 Policy Workgroup Meeting